

REMARKS

Claims 1-10, 13-24, and 28 remain in the application with claims 1 and 15 having been amended hereby and claim 27 having been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested of the rejection of the claims under 35 USC 103, as being unpatentable over Sato et al. in view of Horlander et al.

In paragraph 8 of the Instant Official Action claim 27 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim 15 has been amended hereby to include the allowable subject matter of claim 27. Claim 27 has been canceled. Similarly, claim 1 has been amended to include claim 27.

Therefore, by reason of the inclusion of the allowable subject matter of claim 27 in independent claims 1 and 15, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1-7, 10, 13-21, 24, and 28 are now patentably distinct over the cited references.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested of the rejection of claims 8, 9, 22, and 23 under 35 USC 103, as being unpatentable over Sato et al. in view of Horlander et al. and further in view of Sugita et al.

Claims 8 and 9 depend from claim 1 and claims 22 and 23 depend from independent claim 15. As noted hereinabove, the independent

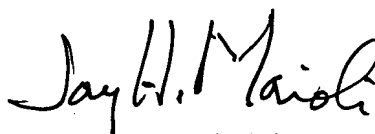
claims in this application all include the allowable subject matter of claim 27, therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claims 8, 9, 22, and 23 are patentably distinct over the cited references.

Therefore, by reason of the inclusion of allowable subject matter in the independent claims in this application, it is respectfully submitted that all claims remaining in this application are now in condition for allowance.

The references cited as of interest have been reviewed and are not seen to show or suggest the present invention as recited in the amended claims.

Favorable reconsideration is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,  
COOPER & DUNHAM LLP

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jay H. Maioli". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jay H. Maioli  
Reg. No. 27, 213

JHM:tb